



Disciples in Mission

Everyone. Everywhere. Every Need.

Isaiah 58: 6-10

Disciples Mission Week 2026
September 8-13, 2026



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Introduction to Worship Guide

Greetings Disciples,

Faith leaders from across the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada have joined in covenant to create the Disciples Mission Week 2026 Worship Guide. This resource is designed to encourage and celebrate the many ways our congregations engage in mission as we embody the theme: “Disciples in Mission. Everyone. Everywhere. Every Need.” Grounded in Isaiah 58:6–10, this guide reminds us that authentic worship is inseparable from acts of justice, compassion, generosity, and service. The prophet’s call to loose the bonds of injustice, feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, and care for those in need continues to challenge and inspire the church, our ministry partners, and communities today. As we gather in worship, we are invited not only to praise God with our words but also to reflect God’s love through our actions in the world.

This guide offers a variety of worship resources for use on Sunday, September 13, 2026, during Disciples Mission Week. Prayers, artwork, litanies, sermon aids, communion meditations, storytelling resources, music suggestions, generosity moments, and celebration ideas provide opportunities for both personal and communal reflection, inspiration, and worship. Whether your congregation is large

or small, urban, suburban, rural, or located in a small town, long-established or newly planted, these resources are intended to help recognize and celebrate the many ways God is already at work through your congregation’s ministry and outreach efforts. May this worship guide support each congregation in renewing its commitment to serving Christ beyond the sanctuary walls and inspire disciples to respond faithfully to God’s call, bringing hope, healing, and transformation to local communities and beyond. Together, may we continue to be a church that seeks to serve everyone, in every place, and respond to every need.

We give thanks to the Disciples Mission Week Planning Committee, Disciples Home Missions staff, worship guide contributors, regions, congregations, and our partner General Ministries for their participation, collaboration, and support. Disciples Mission Week is a powerful expression of our covenantal life together, and its success is made possible through your faithful engagement and generosity. Thank you for helping to strengthen the church’s witness and mission as we serve Christ in communities across the United States and Canada.

Grace and peace,

Rev. Chris Dorsey

President & CEO, Disciples Home Missions

Rev. Derrick L. Perkins, Sr.

Director for Congregational Vitality & Innovation and Merger Staff, Disciples Home Missions

Disciples in Mission

Everyone. Everywhere. Every Need.



Artwork and Artist Statement



Break Forth (2026) stitched fabric

Rev. Mollie Donihe Wilkerson

Minister of Creative Spirituality, Ridglea Christian Church, Fort Worth, Texas

Artist Statement

Through layers of stitched fabric, this artwork draws on the liberative themes of Isaiah 58:6-10. Flowers bloom from a crack stretching across the surface of the work, symbolizing both rupture and possibility. Rays of light shine through the cracked surface, “[breaking] forth like the dawn” (v. 8). A chain lies broken beneath the blooms, reflecting Isaiah’s vision of liberation: “to loose the bonds of injustice,” “to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke” (v. 6).

Healing “springs up quickly” (v. 8) in the symbolism of the flowers, which bloom even within harsh environs. A bee visits the flowers and then moves in the direction of the light rays, carrying the promise of pollination, continued growth, and future flourishing. With raw edges and many textures pieced together, this piece invites viewers to reflect on the sacred work of tending to the wounds of the world until new life becomes possible for all.

This piece was created for Disciples Mission Week by liturgical textile artist Rev. Mollie Donihe Wilkerson. Mollie is the Minister of Creative Spirituality at Ridglea Christian Church in Fort Worth, TX. You can find her artwork and clergy stoles at molliedonihe.com.

Mollie Donihe grants a non-exclusive, non-transferable license for use of the artwork solely in connection with the agreed-upon project/event (Disciples Mission Week 2026) and its related promotional materials. Any additional use beyond the scope of the original project, including merchandise, fundraising, resale, publication in unrelated materials, or ongoing organizational use, requires additional written permission and may require additional licensing fees. Artist credit where reasonably possible is appreciated. Email info@molliedonihe.com with any questions.

Call to Worship

Rev. Daniel Lyvers

Senior Minister, First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Chattanooga, TN

Inspired by Isaiah 58

ONE: We gather to worship the One who calls us to lives of love, justice, and service.

MANY: Here, in song and scripture, in prayer and at the Table, we seek the fast that God chooses.

ONE: To loose the bonds of injustice and break every yoke.

MANY: To liberate the oppressed, to share our bread with the hungry, to affirm dignity, and to bring others in.

ONE: We gather to worship the One who sets an open Table and calls us to lives of justice and wholeness.

MANY: Here, in song and scripture, in prayer and at the Table, we are shaped for a faith of love and light that rises still.



Reflection and Prayer

Rev. Jean-Daniel O'Donnada

National Pastor, The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Canada

Canada, like every country, has a self-image, a story we tell ourselves. Like every other country, it can often be more aspirational than achieved. A key line our national anthem hints at is part of our view of ourselves. "The true north, strong and free." Of course we are not unique in being north, strong, or free. But when I contrast the story of ourselves found in our anthem, and the words of Isaiah, I see a reflection of what Christians in Canada are called to be.

We do not sacrifice as a performance of our goodness. Sacrifice ought to improve others' lives. We accept taxes, not just to give, but to provide universal health insurance. We risk at times seeing our social safety nets, though, as having completed work that is not complete. Within Canada we still have oppressed, hungry, poor, unclothed, and unhoused neighbours. And insofar as we are blessed, we are called to share beyond our borders.

Isaiah promises that if we spend ourselves on behalf of others, our light will rise in the darkness.

Much of our country knows darkness, with winter sunsets where I live at 4 pm and winter sunrises simply never happening for my most northern fellow Canadians. My own home of Québec also knows light. Electricity is one of our most significant exports. We literally illuminate our neighbours.

Gratitude for what we have—wherever we live, whatever story we tell about it—too easily becomes a smug satisfaction, when the prophetic call to the privileged is generosity not pride.

God of freedom, light, of warmth, of healing, when we are safe to be our true selves, when we see the sun shine, when we are housed and clothed, or when we enjoy good health, may we give you thanks and praise. Yet may your Holy Spirit intervene and transform our gratitude into generosity, hearing your call to make and deliver all blessings to those who still pray for them. Amen.

Theme Scripture

Isaiah 58:6-10, NRSV

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the LORD shall be your rearguard.⁹ Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am. If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,¹⁰ if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.



Hymns, Anthems, Spirituals, Gospel, and Praise Music Recommendations

- [All Belong Here](#) – The Many
- *Called as Partners in Christ's Service*, Chalice Hymnal #453
- [Call To Action](#) – Anthony Brown & Group TherAPy
- [Christ, Be Our Light](#) – Bernadette Farrell
- [Draw the Circle Wide](#) – Mark Miller
- [For Everyone Born](#) – Spirit Song Choir presents "For Everyone Born" by Brian Mann/Shirley Erena Murray, arranged by Tom Trenney.
- [God of the Poor](#) – By Graham Kendrick
- [Guide My Feet](#) – African American Heritage Hymnal #131, Composer Wendell P. Whalum. Morgan State University Choir. Conductor: James Abbingtion.
- [Hold On, Help Is On The Way](#) – Georgia Mass Choir
- *I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me*, Chalice Hymnal #614
- [I Need You to Survive](#) – Hezekiah Walker
- [Isaiah Song](#) – Maverick City Music
- *Jesu, Jesu*, Chalice Hymnal #600
- [Lean on Me](#) – Bill Withers
- [Let Justice Rain](#) – The Many
- [Stand by Me](#) – Ben E. King
- [Table of Love](#) – By Andra Moran
- [This Table is Yours](#) – By The Porter's Gate
- [We Shall Overcome](#) – Freedom Singers
- [What's Going On](#) – Marvin Gaye

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Children Worship Wonder & Welcome



Rev. Laura Ann Phillips

Director of Children Worship Wonder & Welcome, Disciples Home Missions

The People of God in Community

Adapted from *Exile and Return* by Sonja M. Stewart & Jerome W. Berryman, *Young Children & Worship* (Isaiah 58:6 - 10)

Children Worship Wonder & Welcome video link will be provided closer to the event and will be available [here](#).

This story was written for use during Disciples Mission Week 2026, for Disciples Home Missions. It can be used in worship, Christian Education, or other devotion settings, with all ages.

*Walk slowly to the desert box and move it to the circle. Return to the sacred story shelf to get the tray with the **Exile and Return** materials. Carry it carefully with two hands to the circle and place it beside you. Sit quietly while you feel the story forming in you. Then say:*

This is the desert box.

Trace the edge of the desert box.

Inside is a small piece of the desert...So many important things happen in the desert that we just have to have a small piece of it in our room.

Slowly move your hands over the sand, smoothing and molding it, as the sand is transformed into the desert.

The desert is a strange and wild place. At night it is very cold, but in the day, it is burning hot. There is almost no water at all...The desert is always changing. The wind comes and as it blows it shapes and molds. So, the desert is never the same.

Pause, place your hands in your lap, and sit back a moment. Draw a four-inch square in the sand. Put the people of God in the square as you say:

This is the city of Jerusalem, the Holy City of God. The People of God had lived in Jerusalem for a long time...

One day the king from another land came to Jerusalem. He wanted the Holy City for himself. So, he and his army took it from the People of God. They burned the Temple, the house of God, and they tore down the walls around Jerusalem.

Smudge the outline of the square.

And the people of God were taken to a strange land...

Move the people from the city across the desert.

...the land of Babylon. They could not go home.

Place a heavy chain across the middle of the box.

They were in exile.

Then a new king came to Babylon and took it for himself. This king began to let the people of God go back to Jerusalem.

Move all but two of the people from the desert to one end of the chain and say:

When the people returned to Jerusalem, they tried to remember The Ten Best Ways to Live, but sometimes they forget who they are, and how to show God love.

Move the people back to the area where Jerusalem was but spread apart from one another.

Some thought God wanted them to say prayers. Some thought God wanted them to worship in a certain way. Some thought God wanted them to refrain from eating food.

Move the people close together in a circle, as if in worship and say:

Who would show them the ways that God wanted them to live, again?

Present Isaiah and say:

Isaiah was a prophet. Prophets listen to God so they can show us the way. Isaiah was a prophet who listened and spoke the word of God.

Spread the figures slightly apart.

Isaiah reminded the people that God wanted them to care for one another.

Spread the figures a bit further apart so they can each experience something different.

Some people were carrying heavy burdens.

Place a stone beside one figure.

Some people felt trapped.

Place a string/cord around another figure.

Some people were hungry.

Cause one of the people to fall over, as if fainting from hunger.

Some people had no home, nor family, nor protection.

Move one figure distinctly outside the rest of the group.

Through prophets like Isaiah, God showed the people the best ways to live.

Touch or point to Isaiah.

Isaiah reminded them that they should...

Remove the stone and place it back in the basket.

... help carry heavy loads...

Remove the string/cord from the figure and place it back in the basket.

... help people become free...

Stand up the figure that had "fallen over."

... share food with those who need it...

Move the outsider back into the group, into a circle, with Isaiah as part of the circle.

... welcome people in, and care for those in need.

Move ALL the people closer together.

God spoke through Isaiah and said...

"When you care for one another, light comes."

"When you help those who suffer, light comes."

"When you share with those in need, light comes."

Place a candle in the middle of the people and light it with a match (or place an electric candle, turned on, in the middle of the people).

The light came.

The people could see one another more clearly.

The people could see the way before them.

Sit back and look at the community gathered around the light before asking the wondering questions, below.

Wondering Questions

- I wonder what the people were thinking/feeling when they heard these words?
- I wonder how Isaiah felt telling these things to the People of God?



- I wonder how it feels to carry a heavy burden?
- I wonder how it feels when someone helps you?
- I wonder how it feels to be hungry and receive food?
- I wonder how it feels to be welcomed?
- I wonder why helping others is connected to The Light?
- I wonder if the people changed as they gathered around The Light?
- I wonder if God's people still need to hear these words?
- I wonder if you wonder anything about this story?
- I wonder what part of this story you like best?
- I wonder what part of the story is most important?
- I wonder where you are in this story?
- I wonder what parts we could leave out and still have all we need?

Materials

- Desert box
- People of God (from OT stories)
- Isaiah (from Advent stories)
- Heavy chain (from Exile and Return)
- Basket for people
- Basket for cord/string and rock
- Skinny taper candle (and matches if using a real candle)
- Tray for materials

Communion Meditation, Invitation & Prayer

Rev. Dr. Adam Harmon

Regional Minister, Christian Church in Georgia

What is in your hands?

That is the question underneath Isaiah 58. Not a complicated question. But a costly one. Isaiah is not speaking to people who have nothing. He is speaking to people who have more than they have shared. People who have bread and have not broken it. People who have seen a neighbor bent low under an impossible weight and looked the other way.

We gather at this table week after week. Disciples have always gathered here. And we believe this table belongs to Christ, not to us. Christ has a habit of setting it in unexpected places, with unexpected people, and asking the same thing every time: bring what is in your hands and release it.

The bread we break today is not only a remembrance of the upper room. It is a rehearsal. A rehearsal for what the kingdom of God looks like when we actually live it out. Everyone at the table. Everyone fed. No one left out in the cold.

Isaiah's promise is not tentative. He does not say your light might break forth, or could, if you get around to it. He says it will. When you share your bread. When you satisfy the needs of the afflicted. When you stop hiding from your own kin.

Your light will rise. Come to this table. And then go carry it.

An Invitation to the Table

Worship leaders may invite congregation members to bring a physical item forward before receiving communion. Suggestions: a grocery receipt, a set of keys, a tool from their work, a handwritten word ("time," "home," "skill," "presence"). Items are placed on or near the communion table as a sign of what the person is willing to offer in service. Adapt this to fit your congregation's worship culture.

You are invited to come forward. Not empty-handed. Come with what is already in your hands. Whatever you are holding, maybe even holding back, bring it. Lay it down near this table. Let it be a sign that you are ready to carry it not for yourself alone, but for someone who needs what you have.

What does that look like in your hands?



Communion Prayer

Gracious God, we hold in our hands what you have given us. Bread and cup. Time and skill. The capacity for kindness we did not earn.

We confess that we have sometimes chosen comfort over cost, and distance over presence. We have seen the need and kept walking. We have had bread and held it close.

So, we come to this table not as people who have it figured out, but as people still learning what it means to follow the one who broke bread with the outcast, washed the feet of those who would fail him, and said, "Do this in remembrance of me."

Bless this bread. Bless this cup. Feed us for the journey outward, toward the hungry and the unhoused and the overlooked and the heavy-laden. Let what we practice here form us for what we do out there.

May the bread we break today become bread we carry into the world. And when we go from this place, let your light break forth through us like the dawn.

In the name of the one who called himself the bread of life,

Amen.

Questions for Congregational Reflection

For use in a sermon, bulletin, small group, or as an advance invitation to the congregation.

1. What is already in your hands that could become a gift to someone else?

Isaiah does not ask God's people to go find resources. God asks them to release what they already have. What does your congregation already possess that has not yet been offered?

2. How does the table we set in worship connect to the tables where people go hungry?

Disciples believe the communion table matters. But what is the relationship between breaking bread here and the reality of hunger out there? How does what we practice in worship form us for what we do in the world?

3. Where is your congregation's light already shining, and where does it need to shine more brightly?

Isaiah promises that when we give our food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, our light will rise in the darkness. Where is that already true for your congregation? And where is God inviting you further?



Offering Meditation/Generosity Moment

Rev. Melissa R. St. Clair

*Minister for Faith and Giving for the
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Executive Director of the Center for
Faith and Giving*

There's someone you can't meet. I
can't meet. In fact, there's someone
that none of us will ever meet. That's
Everyone.

There's a place that I cannot be. That
you cannot be. That, in fact, all of us
together, will never be. That place is
Everywhere.

There's a need you can't meet. A need I can't meet.
In fact, there are needs that none of us can meet.
You want to take a guess what that need might be?
That need is Every Need.

And that's alright. Because you know what? We are
not in this alone. In Isaiah 58, the prophet speaks to
a people who are frustrated with God. They've done
Every Thing right.

They've fasted. They've performed their rituals.
They've done all the things faithful people are
supposed to do. Yet God seems unmoved.

And so Isaiah does what prophets do. He makes it
plain, if painful: The problem, Isaiah says, is not that
you haven't worshiped. The problem is that your



worship has not changed you. Your fasting has not
changed the way you treat your neighbors. Your
piety has not led to practicing justice. Your devotion
has not become compassion.

So God calls them to a different kind of faithfulness:

- to loose the bonds of injustice...
- to let the oppressed go free...
- to share their bread with the hungry...
- to clothe the naked...
- to bring the homeless poor into their houses
(Isaiah 58:6-7).

In other words, the worship God desires does not
end when we sing the final verse or when we
say amen or when the offering is received. It
becomes visible in the ways we love, serve,
share, and seek the flourishing of others.

This week, we have celebrated Disciples in
Mission: Everyone. Everywhere. Every Need.
[How has your congregation celebrated? Add
a sentence about that here.]

We know that on our own, there is someone
we cannot reach. There is a place we cannot
serve. And there is need greater than we
could ever meet on our own.

And yet. We do know someone. We can go
somewhere. And we can do something to
meet the needs of God's world.

Our gifts today are one way we participate
in that mission. Likewise, the gifts we give
to support the mission of the wider church
through [Disciples Mission Fund](#), which we



also celebrate this week. We give not to perform an act of religious obligation, but to join in God's work in the world. We give so that the lives of others may be changed. And in the act of giving, we discover that we ourselves are also changed.

We offer these resources alongside our prayers, our time, our talents, and our compassion so that hungry people are fed, neighbors are cared for, communities are strengthened, and God's limitless love becomes tangible.

As we receive this offering, we remember generosity is not separate from worship. Generosity is a way in which we worship—and one in which God's mission and ministry become possible.

Recommendations

Everyone includes all ages. Consider how you talk

about generosity with your young ones. Invite children to write or draw on a card: "One way I can help someone this week is..." and to place their cards in the offering plate. Use this simple prayer: "God, use what I have to help someone else."

Procure or print a map of your community or county. Use pins to identify places your congregation is partnering locally to heed the call of Isaiah 58. Include a key with descriptions of each of those partnerships.

Invite a mission partner to join your congregation for worship and share a word about how your congregation's ministry is supporting their mission. (See page 24 of the [Center for Faith & Giving's 2026 Stewardship Theme Materials Campaign Guide](#) for guidance on equipping the person giving this testimony.)



Reflection

- Where have I seen God at work in our community through this congregation?
- How is God inviting me to participate more fully?
- What gifts—time, skills, relationships, resources—am I being called to share?
- What needs in my community break my heart and move me toward action?

Prayers for Offering

Zaemelys Ramos-Rodriguez

Lay leader, Casa de Refugio Christian Church, Covina, CA

Loving God, thank you for all that You do for us. You are always by our side, giving abundant love, protection, and provision. It is this love that moves us to fulfill Your purpose and calling on our lives. You do not forget the widow, the orphan, or people in need, and You call us to help others. We serve others with joy, knowing that You serve and support us daily.

As we offer these gifts today, may they be a blessing and continue to serve Your mission in this world, bringing hope, care, and support to those in need and helping us answer Your call to serve.

Today, I pray for those who are scared to move, scared to hear Your word, and who, like Jonah, have run away from the calling You have bestowed upon them to serve others. I pray that You help them know and understand that they have run long enough and that it is now time to do what You have called them to do. Give them the resources, vision, and strength to serve those in need, and help them realize the importance of obedience to You and of serving others.

May we be faithful disciples in mission, responding to every need with generous hearts and willing hands. In Your name we pray, amen.



Sermon Starters

Rev. Dr. Lee Hull Moses

Senior Pastor, Central Christian Church, Indianapolis, IN

Disciples in Mission—Everyone. Everywhere. Every Need.

Isaiah 58:6-10, NRSVUE

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house when you see the naked, to cover them and not to hide yourself from your own kin? Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, “Here I am.” If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.

Consider the Text

This passage is powerful on its own, but it becomes even more meaningful when we consider the historical context and the placement in the larger work of the book of Isaiah. Keep in mind that the book of Isaiah was likely written in three different time periods in Israel’s history, likely by several different authors who were following in the tradition of the prophet named Isaiah. The first section of the book, chapters 1-39, takes place in Jerusalem, in the context of the rising threat of power from neighboring kingdoms. The second, chapters 40-55, speaks to the people in exile in Babylon, offering them comfort and a promise that they will one day return home. Our passage comes from the final section, chapters 56-66, in which the people of Israel have finally come home from exile and are rebuilding their lives.

Their homecoming, however, has not been the joyous reunion they had hoped for. They had imagined coming home and resuming their lives, restored to their remembered glory. Instead, the temple and their homes lie in ruins. They find themselves lost and disoriented, wondering if they had misunderstood God’s promise. They feel as if

they are in the wilderness again. They wonder if God has indeed abandoned them after all.

As we see in Isaiah 58, they are particularly frustrated and heartbroken that God does not seem to appreciate their acts of worship. “Why do we fast, but you do not see?” they ask God. “Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?” (58:3) In response, the prophet suggests that God is calling them to a different kind of worship and devotion, one that centers not on their own actions, but on their care for the most vulnerable among them. A right relationship with God is not simply about worship but about creating a just community in which everyone is cared for and everyone has what they need.

In fact, the prophet declares that the way out of the disorienting wilderness in which they find themselves is not through pious acts of devotion, but through the caring of the people around them. If you turn your attention to the needs around you, the prophet tells the wandering people, then you’ll begin to feel God’s presence again. Then you’ll be able to see the way ahead.

Modern-Day Connection to Scripture

A modern-day story that could pair nicely with Isaiah’s passage is found in the musical *Come from Away*. The musical was inspired by the true story of the small town of Gander, Newfoundland, on the northeastern tip of Canada, in the days following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. When the airspace in the United States was closed, all airplanes in the air were ordered to land at the closest airport. For many, that airport was in Gander, a tiny town with a population of just 1,000 people. Thirty-eight planes landed at the Gander International Airport that day, depositing over 7,000 people who were stranded there for most of a week, unsure when they would be able to leave, uncertain about what would happen next.

Into this uncertainty, the people of Gander stepped up, providing shelter in schools, community halls, and even their own homes. They cooked food and shared their clothes and gathered supplies from anywhere they could find it. They collected diapers and formula for families with babies. The

pharmacy in town opened to fill prescriptions. The local grocery store donated toiletries. People brought blankets and pillows and bedding to create makeshift beds wherever they could find room.

While the world around them was reeling from the aftermath of the attacks, the people of Gander set out to care for their guests, as well as they could. They had no handbook of what to do, no guidelines or policies to follow. They simply showed up and offered what they could.

The musical plays with themes of disorientation and reorientation, compassion and service, and the meaning of home. When the people of Israel found themselves disoriented and reeling, the prophet calls them to care for each other. In an uncertain and disorienting situation, the people of Gander and the people who had “come from away,” served each other and therein found the way ahead.

Connections to Scripture

As you prepare to preach, consider some of these other texts that have direct or indirect connections to Isaiah 58:6-10. Even if you don’t specifically reference these passages in your sermon, reviewing them can spark your imagination or help you consider the primary text in a new light.

Genesis 1:3-4: The themes of light rising out of darkness in the Isaiah passage may remind us of



the early moments of the creation story, when God separates the light and the darkness. Perhaps we can understand the Isaiah passage as an invitation to be part of a new creation.

Exodus 13:21-22: After escaping bondage in Egypt, as the Hebrew people wandered in the wilderness, God’s presence was with them in the form of a pillar of cloud and fire. We hear echoes of this in Isaiah 58:8 and 58:10. In what way is Isaiah describing a new exodus?

Matthew 25:35-36: Jesus tells the disciples, “I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” Both Jesus and the prophet Isaiah seem particularly interested in meeting the basic human needs of the people around them. How might such an understanding inform your preaching?

What other scripture passages come to mind when you read Isaiah 58:6-10?





Food for Thought

Remember that the preacher is not the only storyteller in the congregation. This passage offers an opportunity to invite others to share their stories. If you have a food pantry or clothing ministry, you could recruit a regular volunteer to share their experience of serving. If you have someone working on the front lines of advocacy work, invite them to share their passion. If you have someone who has experienced homelessness, invite them to share their story.

This might be a good Sunday to invite guests from local agencies in your community to share about their work. Invite someone from your city's social services department to describe the reality of trying to access resources or assistance to help with housing, clothes, or food. Many of us take for granted the ease with which we move through the world. Hearing a different perspective can shake us out of our comfort zone.

Reread vs. 7. Notice the encouragement to share your bread with the hungry, and to bring the homeless poor into your house. Isaiah seems to be calling for very personal engagement, breaking down the distance between those who need and those who have. Consider the ways your congregation meets the needs of your neighbors. Are there clear lines between the ones providing the care and those needing assistance? We might

feel perfectly comfortable serving food at a food pantry or supporting a local homeless shelter. But we might have second thoughts about inviting a neighbor experiencing homelessness to stay in our guest room. Why is that? What if we did? These could be interesting and challenging questions to explore.

Note the word "healing" in vs. 10. Usually when we talk about service to our neighbors, we are focused on the care they receive, the hope and healing we can offer to them. But what if our own hope and healing are tied up in our care for others? How might a ministry of action and service change those who serve?

Notes of Caution

This passage contains some beautiful imagery of light and dark: "your light shall break forth the dawn... your light shall rise in the darkness." When exploring this imagery, beware of the complicated history of light and dark as metaphors, especially in the context of American racism. Watch for ways that "light" and "white" have been associated with goodness, while "darkness" or "black" have negative connotations. How could you play with this imagery in your sermon to counterbalance that context?

Sometimes when we talk about serving our neighbors, we default to a narrative of "us" and "them." We - that is, we the good church people who are called to serve - set out to feed and clothe





them - that is, the other, who needs our help. The reality is that many people who are listening to the sermon may have been the recipients of such service in the past. How can you talk about acts of service without being condescending or patronizing?

As with any text, it's wise to ask who we aren't hearing from. Whose voices might get lost and

need to be amplified? In this passage, perhaps it is the people who are hungry, homeless, and naked. What are their stories? What do they have to teach us? How might you hear the stories of the people in your own time and place whose voices have been silenced?

A Prayer for the Preachers

Life-giving God, God of word and action, God of darkness and God of light:

Hear this prayer for the preachers as they wrestle with this text. Give them space to breathe this week so that the breath of your spirit can move within them.

Give them the gift of courage to call their congregations to action when needed. Remind them of their calling to be prophets. Give them the words they need to nudge their people closer to your call.

Give them a spirit of gentleness and compassion. Speak to them through this text, rise up like the new day and inspire them.

When words are hard to come by, when the pressing needs of the week weigh down on them, breathe life into them. Help them to know they are enough.

Give them your joy and let them rejoice at the preaching of your word, for it is good news: for the preacher, for the listener, for all of us.

In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

Questions to Ponder

Think about the service ministries your church is involved in. In what ways do they mirror the call from Isaiah? Does your congregation help feed the hungry? Clothe the naked? House the homeless? How could you highlight this work in your sermon?

Isaiah also calls the people to the work of justice. How is your congregation called to do justice work in your community? If this is a growing edge for your church, how could you use this sermon to help them live more deeply into that call?

The work of justice and service is beneficial to the people being served, but the ones doing the serving are also helped. Can you think of a time when your congregation was uplifted because of the work they did to serve their neighbors?

In what ways is your congregation feeling disoriented these days? Is there a sense in which they - like the Israelites - have returned home but still feel a little lost? How can you validate those feelings and help them respond?

Isaiah says that if the people care for the needs of their neighbors, "your light shall rise in the darkness, and your gloom shall be like the noonday." What do you think that means in your context? What would it look like for your congregation's light to rise?

Pre-recorded Sermon

Rev. Chris Dorsey

President & CEO, Disciples Home Missions, Indianapolis, IN

The sermon video link will be provided closer to the event and will be available [here](#).



Isaiah 58: 6-10 (NRSVUE)

- 6** Is not this the fast
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the straps of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
- 7** Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
- 8** Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator[a] shall go before you;
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.
- 9** Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, "Here I am."
If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
- 10** if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.



Litany of Response

韓敬歆 - **Ching-Hsin (Steven) Han**

生命樹基督教會 - *First Christian Church of El Monte*

LEADER: God who sees (El Roi), you have shown us the fast you choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, and to break every yoke. Where our neighbors with disabilities meet barriers we have built and burdens we have ignored, call us to break every yoke — until every door is open, every gift is welcomed, and every body and mind are honored as your image.

PEOPLE: You say to us, “Here I am.” Here we are, Lord — send us to break every yoke.

LEADER: God our Provider (Jehovah Jireh), you call us to share our bread with the hungry. Where children go to school with empty stomachs, where elders choose between groceries and medicine, where pantry shelves stand bare, teach us that bread hoarded is bread stolen, and bread shared is bread blessed.

PEOPLE: You say to us, “Here I am.” Here we are, Lord — send us to share our bread.

LEADER: God our Refuge, you command us to bring the homeless poor into our house and to cover the naked. Where our neighbors sleep in cars, under bridges, and outside our sanctuary doors, give us hearts that see faces instead of problems, and hands that build welcome instead of walls.

PEOPLE: You say to us, “Here I am.” Here we are, Lord — send us to make room.

LEADER: God our Healer (Jehovah Rapha), you promise that our light shall break forth like the dawn and our healing shall spring up quickly. Where sickness is borne unequally, where care is delayed, denied, or priced beyond reach, make your church an instrument of healing — until wholeness is not a privilege for some but your gift for all.

PEOPLE: You say to us, “Here I am.” Here we are, Lord — send us to bring healing.

LEADER: God who answers when we call, you promise that if we offer our food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, our light shall rise in the darkness. So, we offer ourselves — some of us confessing for the first time that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; all of us recommitting our hands, our feet, our gifts, and our days to your mission in our own communities.

PEOPLE: You say to us, “Here I am.” Here we are, Lord — everyone, everywhere, for every need. Let our light rise in the darkness. Amen.



Moment of Celebration

Rev. Brenda Booth

Executive Director, Isaiah 58 Ministries, St. Louis, MO

“Everyone, Everywhere, Every Need”

LEADER: Gathered on this Disciples Mission Sunday, we remember that mission is not something that happens far away, carried out by someone else. Mission is the heartbeat of the church. It is the work of love made visible in every place where people are hungry for food, dignity, hope, justice, compassion, and belonging.

PEOPLE: We celebrate the ways God is already at work among us.

LEADER: We celebrate congregations that open their doors wide.

We celebrate volunteers who show up faithfully.

We celebrate meals shared, clothing distributed, prayers offered, relationships restored, and hope renewed.

PEOPLE: We celebrate that every act of compassion matters.

LEADER: Across cities and small towns...

In sanctuaries, fellowship halls, shelters, schools, and neighborhood streets...

God is meeting people through the hands and hearts of ordinary disciples.

PEOPLE: Everyone. Everywhere. Every Need.

LEADER: We celebrate not only what has been done, but what is still possible when communities come together in love.

Invitation to Congregational Celebration

Following worship, congregations are encouraged to create a tangible “Moment of Celebration” within their own communities. This may include:

- Sharing a meal with neighbors and community partners
- Hosting a mission fair highlighting local ministries and outreach opportunities
- Inviting guests served through community programs to share stories and testimonies

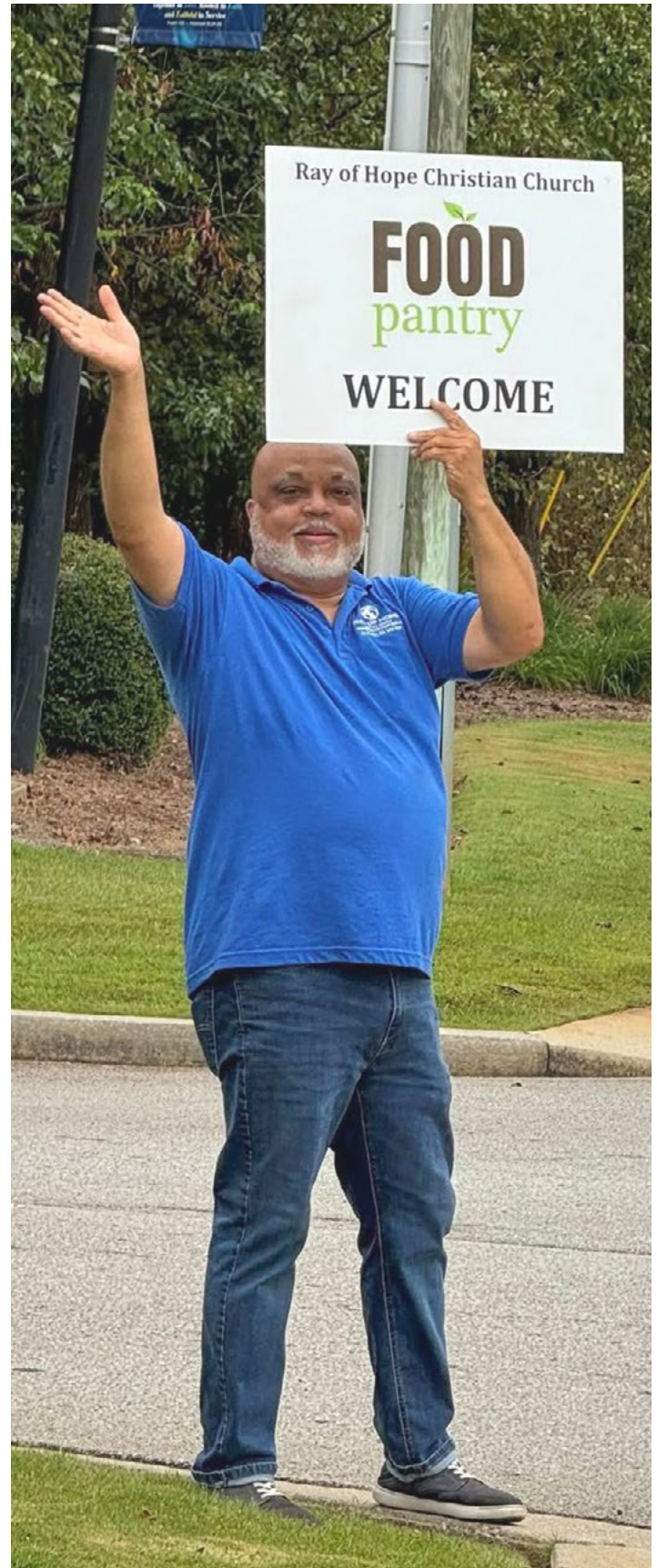


- Writing encouragement cards or assembling care packages
- Recognizing volunteers and mission leaders within the congregation
- Creating a “wall of hope” where people can name needs they see in the community and ways the church can respond
- Gathering around tables for conversation about where God is calling the congregation next

These celebrations need not be elaborate. The most meaningful moments often happen when people gather authentically, listen deeply, and build relationships across lines that too often divide us.

Closing Prayer

God of compassion and abundance, thank you for the countless ways your people serve with courage, generosity, and love. Remind us that mission is not simply something we support, but something we live. Send us into our communities ready to welcome everyone, to serve everywhere, and to respond to every need with grace and humility. May our churches become places where hope is shared, dignity is restored, and beloved community is built. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.



Benediction

Minister Gabrielle Davis

Member of Light of the World Christian Church, Indianapolis, IN
Christian Theological Seminary M.Div. Student

Sent in Light and Love

Beloved, as you leave this time of worship, remember that the God who calls us is the God who sends us. Go now as disciples in mission. Go to places near and far. Go to neighbors and strangers. Go to places of joy and places of need. May you loose the bonds of injustice, share your bread with the hungry, welcome the stranger, and bear witness to God's love in both word and deed. When the work feels difficult, may God's Spirit strengthen you. When the need feels overwhelming, may God's grace sustain you. When you wonder if your efforts matter, may you remember that even small acts of compassion can become signs of God's kingdom (kin-dom)¹.

May your light rise in the darkness, and may God use your hands, your voice, your compassion, and

your presence to bring healing and hope wherever you are sent.

May your light break forth like the dawn, your hope rise with each new day, and your life reflect the love of Christ wherever you go.

Go as people sent by God. Go as bearers of Christ's love. For everyone. In every place. Responding to every need. Go in peace. Go in purpose. Go in love.

And may the blessing of God the Creator, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, be with you, guide you, and sustain you now and always. Amen.

¹ The term kin-dom is used by some Christians to emphasize the relational and communal nature of God's reign. Worship leaders are invited to use either kingdom or kin-dom according to their theological tradition and congregational context.



Thank you

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